

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAO PA 02112 101354Z

55

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /028 W
----- 057712

R 101300Z SEP 76

FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7118
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL PORTO ALEGRE
AMCONSUL RECIFE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAO PAULO 2112

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, BR

SUBJ: O ESTADO PUBLISHERS WORRIED ABOUT REIMPOSITION OF
PRESS CENSORSHIP

REF: (A) BRASILIA 7378 (B) BRASILIA 6996

1. USIS OFFICERS SPOKE WITH RUY MESQUITA, JORNAL DA TARDE PUBLISHER, ON AUGUST 31. MESQUITA SAID HE WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT FURTHER LIBERALIZATION IN VIEW OF RECENT READICALIZATION OF POLITICAL SITUATION CHARACTERIZED BY BOMBINGS, BOMB THREATS AND SPEECHES BY JOSE BONIFACIO GOVERNMENT LEADER IN CHAMBER, ACCUSING MDB OF HAVING LINKS WITH COMMUNISM. RUY MESQUITA STATED THAT HE CONSIDERED CONTINUED PRESS FREEDOM IN JEOPARDY.

2. MESQUITA RECOUNTED THAT O ESTADO BUREAU CHIEF IN BRASILIA, CARLOS CHAGAS, WAS TOLD INFORMALLY BY PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY HUMBERTO BARRETO AND CIVIL HOUSEHOLD CHIEF, GENERAL GOLBERY, THAT THE PRESIDENT IS UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM RIGHT WING RADICALS WITHIN THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. BOTH OFFICIALS PLED FOR O ESTADO'S SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT GEISEL AND HIS LIBERALIZATION PROGRAM.

3. MESQUITA MENTIONED THAT HIS BROTHER, O ESTADO PUBLISHER
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAO PA 02112 101354Z

JULIO MESQUITA NETO, WAS CALLED BY AN OFFICER IN THE MILITARY

HOUSEHOLD ASKING FOR O ESTADO'S SUPPORT FOR THE ORESIDENT AGAINST RADICAL ELEMENTS. BRITISH CONSUL GENERAL, WHO MET WITH JULIO MESQUITA ON SEPTEMBER 3 SAID THAT MESQUITA IDENTIFIED THE OFFICER WHO HAD MADE THE REQUEST AS MILITARY HOUSEHOLD CHIEF GEN. HUGO ABREU.

4. RUY MESQUITA TOLD USIS OFFICERS THAT HE MAY WISH TO DISCUSS FREEDOM OF THE PRESS WITH AMBASSADOR CRIMMINS. HE STATED THAT JULIO MESQUITA SPOKE RECENTLY WITH THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR ABOUT PRESS FREEDOM. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAD AGREED TO "PRESSURE" THE GOB TO AVOID REIMPOSITION OF PRESS CENSORSHIP. THE BRITISH CONSUL GENERAL TOLD CONGEN THAT JULIO MESQUITA DISCUSSED PRESS FREEDOM AND IMMINENT DANGER OF RESTRICTIVE MEASURES DURING A CALL BY BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE.

5. COMMENT: THE TOUGH NOTES READ OVER VOZ DO BRAZIL LATE LAST WEEK SIGNALLED A CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF O ESTADO'S EXPOSE OF ABUSES OF PRIVILEGES BY GOVERNMENT MINISTERS AND HIGH-RANKING CIVIL SERVANTS. THE NOTES STATED THAT A GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATION HAD NOT DISCOVERED WIDESPREAD ABUSES OF HOUSEHOLD ALLOWANCES OR OF CREDIT CARDS, AND THAT ONLY SIX STATE COMPANY DIRECTORS WERE EARNING MORE THAN CR\$80,000 A MONTH. O ESTADO'S EXPOSE WAS DENOUNCED AS PRECIPITOUS AND MISLEADING.

6. O ESTADO HAS ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT EDITORIALY OF TRYING TO SWEEP THE ABUSES UNDER THE RUG. IT POINTS TO THE FACT THAT CREDIT CARDS FOR STATE COMPANIES HAVE BEEN SUPPRESSED, THAT THE GOVERNMENT REFUSED TO REVEAL THE SALARIES OF THE HEADS OF STATE COMPANIES, AND THAT INVESTIGATIONS OF ABUSES OF HOUSEHOLD ALLOWANCES WERE IN-HOUSE AND DID NOT QUESTION THE EXISTENCE OF THE ALLOWANCES IN THE FIRST INSTANCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, RIVAL FOLHA DE SAO PAULO PRAISED THE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS INVESTIGATION AND POUNCED ON O ESTADO FOR DOING A POOR JOB OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING. LEADERS OF OPPOSITION MDB IN CONGRESS HAVE GENERALLY SHRUGGED OFF RESULTS OF GOVERNMENT'S SELF-EXAMINATION AND HAVE CONTINUED TO CALL FOR PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO PRIVILEGES OF SUPERFUNCTIONARIES.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAO PA 02112 101354Z

7. THE PRESSURES ON PRESIDENT GEISEL TO ABANDON HIS LIBERALIZATION PROGRAM MAY BE REAL, BUT THE GOVERNMENT APPROACHES TO O ESTADO APPEAR TO BE MORE CLOSELY RELATED TO A FEELING WITHIN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE THAT O ESTADO, HAVING UNDULY EMBARRASSED THE PRESIDENT, NOW OWES HIM A FAVOR. THE MESQUITAS, FEELING THE PRESIDENTIAL PRESSURE DIRECTLY, TALKED OF DANGERS TO THE PRESS IN GENERAL, BUT, AS USUAL,

THEY THINK OF THEMSELVES AS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE
PRESS.

8. EMBASSY CONCURS.
CHAPIN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CENSORSHIP, POLITICAL REPRESSION, THE PRESS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SAOPA02112
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760342-0769
From: SAO PAULO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760972/aaaacjsb.tel
Line Count: 120
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BRASILIA 7378, 76 BRASILIA 6996
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 JUL 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <25 OCT 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: O ESTADO PUBLISHERS WORRIED ABOUT REIMPOSITION OF PRESS CENSORSHIP
TAGS: PINS, SOPN, BR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006